

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-27. (Canceled)

28. (Previously Presented) A method for managing network address translation (NAT) connections over a network, comprising:

storing a plurality of NAT connection data in a data store;

for each stored NAT connection datum, assigning each of a plurality of data structure types to the same stored NAT connection datum, wherein each of the plurality of data structure types are based on at least one of an IP address or a port number;

receiving a request for a NAT connection datum, wherein the request includes an IP address and port number;

automatically determining one of the plurality of data structure types best suited to the NAT connection datum; and

employing the determined data structure type to retrieve the requested NAT connection datum.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 28, further comprising:

identifying a key in the request for the NAT connection datum;

dividing the key into segments; and

employing each segment to search one of the plurality of data structure types to locate the requested NAT connection datum.

30. (Currently Amended) A server array controller for managing network connections between a client and a plurality of servers, comprising:

a storage component that stores a plurality of connection data objects in a data store;

a first object retrieval component that ~~employs~~ is configured to employ a first data structure type to retrieve each of the plurality of connection data objects from the data store;

a second object retrieval component that ~~employs~~is configured to employ a second data structure type to retrieve each of the plurality of connection data objects from the data store;

employing a trie data structure type;

second data retrieval means for retrieving each of the plurality of connection data objects by employing a ~~different~~ data structure type that is different from the trie data structure type;

storage means for storing a plurality of connection data objects, each of the plurality of connection data objects being accessible by each of the first data retrieval means and the second data retrieval means; and

third data retrieval means for retrieving each of the plurality of connection data objects by selecting one of the first data retrieval means or second data retrieval means based on a request for a connection data object.